



Department of Justice

United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton
Middle District of Florida

Tampa

Orlando

Jacksonville

Fort Myers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: STEVE COLE

Tuesday, November 25, 2008

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr>

FAX: (813) 274-6300

JACKSONVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME

Jacksonville, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton today announced that Juan Carlos Gonzalez, a 51-year-old resident of Jacksonville, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire and bank fraud. The maximum penalties that Gonzalez face are 30 years' imprisonment, a fine in the amount of \$1 million, and a term of supervised release of five years.

According to the plea agreement, Gonzalez negotiated the purchase of residential real estate properties in 2004 and 2005. Gonzalez retained a licensed real estate appraiser to fraudulently appraise the properties at significantly inflated values. At Gonzalez's direction, false financial information pertaining to third-party buyers, including altered financial documents such as bank statements, was submitted to lenders, along with the fraudulent appraisal. The loans that were obtained with the fraudulent information significantly exceeded the actual purchase price. At the closings on the properties, Gonzalez received the difference between the loan amount, which was based on the inflated appraisal, and the actual purchase price. This difference was the proceeds of the fraud.

Over the course of the scheme, Gonzalez fraudulently obtained loans on at least 42 properties, victimizing numerous lenders, including federally insured financial

institutions. The fraudulent acts resulted in lenders extending more than \$22 million in mortgage loans, which would not have been approved but for the fraud. Gonzalez, who had no other source of significant income, was the primary beneficiary of the scheme, which grossed more than \$5 million.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Arnold B. Corsmeier.